



The Martha Messenger

Community Newsletter of the Martha T. Berry MCF

December 2009

Volume 13

Wishing You And Yours Peace And Joy During The Holiday Season



Celebrating Together At Martha T. Berry



The decorated Christmas Tree is one of the best known and loved symbols used during the Christmas season.

Starting at about mid November elves (otherwise known as the Activities and Recreation Staff members) start creeping through the halls and rooms of Martha T. Berry, leaving behind colorful trees, wreaths, bells, bows, Santas, and decorations of all kinds. The facility takes on a fairy tale look as more and more areas are completed until, one day, a transformation has taken place and we know that the Holiday Season has arrived at MTB. The beauty of the season is reflected in the sparkling eyes and smiling faces of

our residents as they stop, look and enjoy the wonders around them. It is a time of memories, a period in which we recall the happy experiences of childhood but also, a time to celebrate here and now with the new friends we have made here at MTB.

As we gaze at the Christmas tree, we see a kind of mosaic, fashioned of many individual lights. As we consider our facility, we realize that we bring to it all the many ways in which we observe and celebrate this special time of the year, the Holiday Season.



This Nativity set is done in a traditional, realistic manner.

Depending on the ethnic background of our MTB residents and staff, we find the season

a time for observing Christmas, Kwanzaa, or Hanukkah. We can better understand the friends and neighbors around us by appreciating the ways in which they celebrate this very special time of the year.



This traditional Polish Nativity set, called a Szopka, is made of straw.

Christmas, celebrated on December 25th, is a Christian holiday, observing the birth of Jesus over two thousand years ago. The symbols of celebration are familiar to us all. One of the most widely used Christian symbols is the Nativity set depicting the stable and persons said to be present at the birth of Jesus. Sets vary in style as well as in the kinds of materials used to

fashion them. Nativity figurines can be ornate or simple, realistic or stylized, made of precious materials or made from clay or straw. It is said that the idea of a Nativity scene was first created by Francis of Assisi in 1223. Francis used live persons and animals in his depiction of the Nativity. His idea has become the Nativity set as we know it and is used throughout the world during the observance of Christmas.



A traditional Nativity Scene is set up in the second floor sitting area at MTB.

Kwanzaa is an African American celebration that focuses on African values, founded in 1966 by Doctor Maulana Karenga. While it is observed in December, it is not meant to be a substitute for Christmas and is neither a religious or political celebration. It is a time for African Americans to reaffirm their ancestors and their culture. The word Kwanzaa means “first fruits of the harvest” in the African language Kiswahili. Dr. Karenga added an additional “A” to the African word Kwanza to reflect on the difference between the American and the African Celebration. The celebration begins on December 26 and



A table is set with traditional symbols for the Kwanzaa celebration.

ends on January 1st. Throughout the seven days of celebration, a Kinara candle is lit daily to observe the principles of unity, self determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperation, purpose, creativity and faith. The colors of Kwanzaa are black, red, and green. Since its founding, Kwanzaa has rapidly grown in popularity and is said to be observed by 18 million people around the world.



The Kinara, or seven branch candle holder is used during the observance.

In Judaism, **Hanukkah**, the Festival of Lights is celebrated to observe the consecration of the new altar in the temple in Jerusalem in the year 165 BC. According to tradition, it was instituted by Judas Maccabeus and his brothers. The Syrian king, Antiochus IV, took over the Jewish temple, looted it, and erected an idol there. The small Jewish

army, led by Judas, fought the sizable Syrian forces and overcame them. When the temple was cleansed and rededicated, one small bottle of oil, enough to light a lamp for



This is an example of a traditional eight branched Menorah.

only one day, was found. It is said that miraculously, the oil lasted for eight days. The festival Hanukkah observes this miracle. An eight branched candleholder called the Menorah is the symbol of Hanukkah and, all around the world, Jewish families gather to light a candle on the Menorah each night for eight nights during this Festival of Lights. The center candle is used to light the other candles in the Menorah.

No matter the name of the holiday we observe or how we celebrate, let us all join together in respect and brotherhood with one another and wish to those around us, “Peace on Earth to all men of good will.”...a happy holiday to all the MTB family.




Happy December Birthday To Our Residents

Edward Persley	12-2	Barbara Ranoni	12-2
Virginia Osta	12-3	Holly Robinson-Cartwright	12-4
Elmer Yennor	12-5	Debra McCoig	12-6
Marilyn Russell	12-7	Julie Lynch	12-7
Lora Schulz	12-8	Valerie Kistela	12-9
John Lagina	12-10	Larry Schneider	12-10
Wayne Baker	12-11	Donna Morin	12-12
Therese Ambrose	12-12	Linda Goff	12-15
Brenda Nichols	12-15	Lenore Plawchan	12-17
Agnes Rastall	12-18	Dorothy Powell	12-18
Roger Kukuk	12-18	Patrick Konopski	12-19
Christine Ryszka	12-24	Christine Campbell	12-25
Mary Malkowski	12-27	Marion Grant	12-30
Rita Dean	12-31	Brenda Oplinus	12-31



December Activities

12-1 Pottspouri Jewelry Sale	10:00 AM-3:30 PM
12-2 Resident Council	2:30 PM
12-3 Food Committee	2:00 PM
12-4 Christmas Open House	7:00 PM
12-5 King of Kings Bingo!	10:30 AM
12-6 Knights of Columbus Rosary	2:00 PM
12-6 Metro Tabernacle Christmas Party	2:30 PM
12-8 L'Anse Creuse Carolers	2:30 PM
12-8 Tony the Accordion Player and Banjo Dan	7:00 PM
12-9 Aunt Theresa Bingo	10:30 AM
12-9 Birthday Bingo	2:30 PM
12-10 Good Neighbor Christmas Party	7:00 PM
12-11 HCI \$6.00 Sale	7:00 AM until 4:00 PM
12-12 King of Kings Music Group	10:30 AM
12-13 New Life Ambassador Church	11:00 AM
12-15 Second Floor Christmas Party	2:30 PM
12-16 Cootie Bingo	7:00 PM
12-17 Third Floor Christmas Party	2:30 PM
12-17 American Legion Carolers	7:00 PM
12-18 Godiva Chocolate Sale	10:00 AM-3:00 PM
12-19 Lioness Bingo	10:30 AM
12-22 Dollar Store	2:30 PM
12-25 Christmas Jingo!	2:30 PM
12-29 Red Hat Tea Party	2:30 PM
12-31 New Year Social	7:00 PM



Celebrating a Birthday In December



Mary Malkowski, our December birthday celebrant with her husband, David.

Mary Malkowski says that she never minded having a birthday close to Christmas even though it sometimes meant combining presents. Born on December 27th in old St. Mary Hospital, Mary grew up on Detroit's east side. As the oldest of three children, she had a special relationship with each of her two brothers acting as playmate to the one three years younger and as the baby sitter for the one twelve years younger. Mary recalls having a very special doll as a child, a Terry Lee doll fashioned after a real child. One Christmas, she fondly recalls, all the little girls in the neighborhood received Terry Lee dolls and spent long hours playing together with them. She also recalls many pets that were part of the household when she was a child, especially a cat named Whiskers. Mary attended Stelwagon Elementary School and Finny High. After graduation, she worked in the linens and towel departments of the down town Crowley Store. Mary met her husband, David, on a blind date. One of Mary's girlfriends worked with David and he asked if she could find someone nice for him to date. It was love at first sight and the two were married a year and a half after that first date. Mary says that she loved being a homemaker and especially loved to cook the Polish dishes, golumbki and kielbasa with sauerkraut, that David's mother taught her to make. She was also skilled in preparing the dishes of her own Lebanese ancestry such as kibbi and jaddarah. Mary and David have one son, David Jr. The love of dolls that began with the Terry Lee childhood gift never left Mary. She collected dolls throughout her entire adult life and brought a number of them

along when she came to live at Martha T. Berry. In her room, she has a glass front cabinet in which she proudly displays her favorite dolls. Mary came to MTB about four years ago and David joined her here about a year later. They have adjoining rooms and can often be found sitting together out in the hall on the third floor, greeting everyone who happens to pass by. They both enjoy living here and say that they especially enjoy the activities and games as well as movies and TV. Mary will be celebrating her birthday this month and says she is so happy and fortunate to have David at her side. Mary says that she "has met some very wonderful people here." Have a wonderful birthday, Mary!



Mary and David's wedding photo is displayed in front of her favorite dolls.

Agnes Rastall greets visitors with a warm and friendly smile. She was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, an only child to elderly parents. She didn't have many playmates but remembers playing card games with her father and loving to play out of doors. Her favorite doll, imported from Germany, was named Gloria and was made of cotton stuffed cloth with a ceramic head. She loved a dog named Snowball and recalls chasing her around the house and playing tag with her. As a young woman, Agnes worked at the Burry Biscuit Company on Feeling Good Avenue in N.J. She tells, "the biscuits came down on a roller and you had to grab them fast and put them in a box so they would not pile up." After moving to Michigan, Agnes worked in a jelly factory in Milford. From there, she moved on to Union Carbide and Westinghouse where she worked on an assembly line. Agnes says



Agnes Rastall welcomes everyone with a friendly and winning smile.

she was married twice. The first was a big church wedding but it didn't last. The second, a little affair with a Justice of the Peace, was with John, her true love. John was a farmer and Agnes helped work the farm. The couple sold vegetables on the highway and offered "the very best corn in the world" to their customers. She fondly recalls cats and many sleepy eyed dogs, her favorites being Tyrone and Pete. John and Agnes had four sons, John, Tom, Martin, and Joe. John and Tom are retired and Martin, a stay at home dad in Texas, is very involved in the American Indian movement. She has two grandsons, John and James and a granddaughter, Erin. Agnes came to MTB in 2003 and says that "she just loves to live here." She enjoys Bingo, games, loves to read and feed the birds. Agnes says that "you don't have to worry here and you have the freedom to do what you want to do." Agnes is 86.



Agnes Rastall has always had a beautiful and winning smile.



Residents' Corner



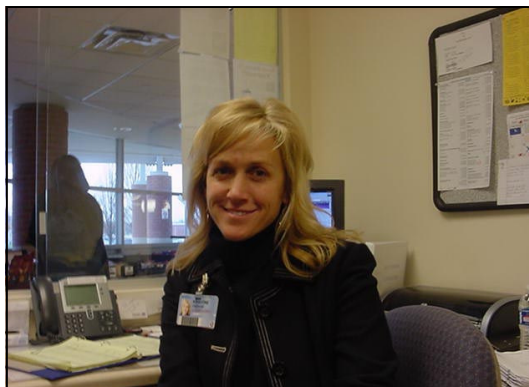
by Laurie Richards

The Resident Council meeting was held on November 4th. The Council discussed, together with the Director of Nursing, Laura Brundirks, many topics including Sera lifts, clothing protectors, briefs, the newly formed Laundry Committee, and customer service. The Director of Nursing reported to the group that in-services have been scheduled for customer service training. The group also discussed clothing protectors and gave feedback as to which variety to order in the future.

December Employees of the Month



Barb Bommarito manages the Resident Accounts Department. She is always friendly and smiling.



Kristine Pierson works at the switchboard. She is helpful and patient with the residents.

Barb Bommarito and Kristine Pierson have been named Employees of the Month by the Resident Council. The residents say that Barb is always smiling and friendly and is always there when she is needed. They say that Kristine is eager to help and answers all questions patiently. Congratulations to Barb and Kristine upon their selection as Employee of the Month for December. Don't forget to use your special, reserved parking space.



Cyndi Says.....



Best Wishes to the entire Martha T. Berry Family, our residents, Staff, their families and friends, for a wonderful Christmas Season. May your New Year be filled with happiness and all good things.

As we end a year filled with new and exciting movements, and as we begin a New Year of anticipation and hope, let us work together to make Martha T. Berry MCF a true home, filled with peace and joy for our residents.

Families, Are You Planning To Bring Clothing Gifts To The Resident On Your Christmas Gift List? Please consider bringing items in early to have names marked on them. There is always a long wait for marking after the holiday season so why not beat the rush and bring in your gift items to be marked beforehand?





IN LOVING MEMORY

Helen Oberdorf

Marie Sieman

David Savich

Polly Menasco

Charles Carpenter

Doris D'Arcy

*Sincere Sympathy Is Extended
To Family and Friends*

December Poem

By Lenore Plawchan



December 7th is Pearl Harbor Day. "This day will live in infamy"
War was declared, people perished. This is a date in our history.

December 11th is the start of Hanukkah...a Jewish holiday.
For the next eight days they will be celebrating in their own special way.

December 21st is the beginning of winter. We have been lucky so far.
I wonder if we could bottle this weather up in a jar.

December 25th is Christmas. We celebrate Jesus' birthday. Born in a stable, in a
manger filled with hay. Shepherds came to see Him following the star.
The Wise Men came bringing gifts from afar.
Santa also comes to town. That jolly old man is so happy.
He brings presents in his sleigh to put under the Christmas tree.

December 31st is New Year's Eve. We ring in the New Year. At midnight it will be 2010
And everyone will cheer. Enjoy December, it is a busy month.
Don't let it pass you by. Everything gets done on time, it's easy when you try.

NEW FACES IN SOME OF MARTHA'S PLACES



Gary Bauerhenn Dietary Department

During the past few months, we have welcomed several new members to the MTB staff. Perhaps you have already met them as they go about their various duties. On the other hand, MTB is a very large facility so in the event you have not yet had the opportunity to extend a welcome, we introduce them in this month's Martha Messenger.

Gary Bauerhenn, a native Detroit, grew up in the Six Mile and Chalmers area. He comes from a family of three boys and two girls, all of whom were very close growing up together and who remain so now. He attended local schools and went on to study food management at Macomb County Community College. It was at the college that he met his wife during his second semester there. He said it took three weeks for her to agree to a first date. Gary has a broad range of Dietary experience in both hospitals and nursing homes including St. John, Saratoga, and Mt. Sinai Hospitals. After a nursing home closing, he found himself looking for a new position and it was his wife, Pamela, who found an ad for MTB in the newspaper. He recalls his interview with Sue Chadda and Cyndi Davis who, after screening his credentials asked, "When can you start?" Gary began soon after and his wife was comforted to learn that he had found a position here. Sadly, Gary's wife was seriously ill at the time and passed away soon after he accepted his present position. He says that he was made to feel at home and was deeply touched and comforted by the support shown to him by the Dietary Staff. Gary's duties here include managing the kitchen, scheduling, ordering food, monitoring food preparation, and making sure that the kitchen area is a safe food preparation

environment." He is "pleased to have been hired, is very happy here, and hopes to spend many years working here." Gary has two children: Michelle, 24, and Andy, 21, who is studying Sports Health at Oakland University. We welcome Gary to MTB and hope he remains as he wishes, "very long time."

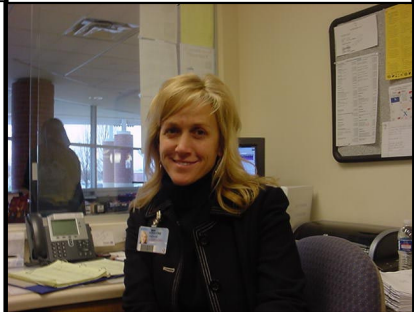


Linda Pointe Human Resources

Linda Pointe describes herself as "a quiet, laid-back kind of kid," while she was in high school. She attended Ascension Elementary, St. Lawrence High, and earned her Bachelor's degree at Sienna Heights. She has one brother, Tom. She recalls summers in which all the neighborhood kids swam and biked together, just having fun. Linda has varied interests including knitting, beading, horseback riding, reading, and traveling. She has visited London, Nice, Frankfurt, Nuremburg, Tokyo and has traveled in India and Australia. Linda started working in management and went through various positions including Operations Manager and Billing Specialist. She realized that the part of her job she enjoyed most was in Human Resources and decided that is the area in which she wanted to pursue her career. Here, at Martha T. Berry, her job description involves work in employee relations, labor relations, mediation, and assisting management and supervisors in working well with staff and vice versa. Linda states that she has two major assignments, namely recruiting and hiring employees here and labor relations. She found MTB through a business friend who told her of the opening. Linda is pleased to have found MTB and describes it as a wonderful facility. She states that she has met a number of "caring people who are deeply interested in helping and being of assistance to

others. We extend a warm welcome to Linda and know that she is already involved in pursuing the goal she had in mind as she accepted her position here, that of "helping people make Martha T. Berry succeed."

Kristine Pierson is possibly one of our better recognized "new comers" since she operates the switchboard from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM each week-day. Kristine describes herself growing up as a "typical tomboy" since she has two brothers very close in age. They spent time "running around out of doors in a neighborhood where all the kids played together riding bikes and playing basketball." Kristine has been married to her husband, Bill for 18 years and has three children: Emily 15, Tyler 13, and Conner who is 8. Interests include



Kristine Pierson Switchboard Operator

travel, attending her children's sporting events, and participating in school events. Kristine has worked at Mt. Clemens Regional Hospital for over 9 years as an administrative assistant. She came to MTB this past July after finding the job opening on the Macomb County Website. She states that she had been looking for something very interesting and that she has found it at MTB since "this is a place where something new and interesting is going on all the time." We welcome Kristine and appreciate her efficient manner routing calls and her warm smile welcoming all who stop at the switchboard.

There are number of Certified Nursing Assistants who have joined the ranks of MTB employees. Space is too limited to greet them all in this issue. We extend a warm welcome to them and will feature them in a future issue.

Welcome To Our New Residents

Theodore Grzebinski Donna Morin
Kenneth Barnwell John Haemelinck
Theresa Cook Norbert Repka
Ruth Streeter Clarence Pomaville
Irene Stricker Eicke Corzilius



Paul Gates
Sharon Crozier
Joanne Gunningham
Patricia Hayes
Norbert Repka

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Join Us for a Delightful Evening
at the
Martha T. Berry Open House

Friday, December 4, 7:00-9:00 PM

